

# LORD ARISHTANEMI.



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## A WORD

The author of this booklet needs no introduction. His two works Lord Mahavira and Lord Parsva are already in the hands of the readers, and as an appreciation of the latter he was presented a certificate of Honour on the occasion of Jayanti Celebration in 1928. The author intends to prepare the biographies of all the 24 Tirthankaras in order, for which our thanks are due in anticipation. Our hearty thanks are also due to B. Kanai Prasad, M.R.A.S. for the appendix and to B. Ajit Prasad, Vakil of Lucknow for writing the preface. The sum incurred in the publication of this tract has been entirely met with by the private purse of B. Mahabir Prasad, Advocate Delhi—the President of the Jain Mittra Mandal. We hope that this noble example will be followed by others. B. Mahabir Prasad deserves our heartfelt gratitude.

THE SECRETARY,

The Jain Mittra Mandal

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## PREFACE.

In Jain traditional Literature, Lord Neminath possesses a unique personality.

He was the first cousin of the Hindu god, Lord Krishna. Samudra Vijai, the father of Lord Neminatha, and Vasudeva, the father of Lord Krishna, were brothers. Lord Neminatha was however, much superior to Lord Krishna, in physical prowess, and intellectual attainments; but he was of a mild and unostentatious disposition; pride he knew not, and luxury he shunned.

Of the various incidents which have led to complete renunciation, and to the adopting of ascetic life, by various Tirthankaras, the one relating to Lord Neminatha is the most unique, and full of pathos

Lord Neminatha proceeded at the head of the wedding procession to the house of his father-in-law, Ugra Sen; and as he neared the palace, he heard the moans and groans of animals who had been placed in an enclosure, and the piteous sight influenced him so much that he set them all free, and turned his chariot back. The entreaties of King Samudra Vijai, Lord Krishna, Balaram,

Queen Siva Devi and Princesses Deoki, Rohni etc., could not dissuade him from his resolve of total renunciation, for his own Liberation.

His unmarried bride Rajalji followed him to the Girnar Hills, which form a very sacred place of pilgrimage, next only to Shri Sammed Shikhar, the Parasnatha Hills.

The richest and the most pathetic part of vernacular Jaina poetry is that which recounts this unique event, in all the languages of India.

It is idle to discuss the question of the historicity of Lord Neminatha, so closely is it wound up with that of Lord Krishna. If Lord Krishna and the Mahabharata are myths, the Jains may be said to have improved upon them; otherwise there is no room for uttering a single sceptical expression.

Our grateful thanks are due to Mr Harisatya Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., of Howrah, for producing a popular and concise representation of the events of the last and previous Lives of Lord Neminatha

# LORD ARISHTANEMI.

## I

"The Mango-tree which is to-day planted in your court-yard will be bearing choicest fruits nine times in different places!"

Towards the close of night one day, Dharini, the queen of Achalapura dreamt that a great being was speaking those words to her, holding in his hand, a tender, budding mango-plant which was surrounded by humming bees. The king, Vikramadhana, when he heard of this wonderful dream from the queen, called in a prognostician. "The dream, O King," said the prognostician, "indicates that you will have a very fine son. But I cannot say what is meant by the fact that the mango-plant is to bear sweet fruits, *nine times*. None but an omniscient being can make out the significance of this."

At the due time, the queen Dharini gave birth to an uncommonly beautiful son to whom the King gave the name Dhana. Prince Dhana, as he advanced in age, was the most accomplished of the princes of that time.

The most beautiful of the princesses of

that time, on the other hand, was Dhanavati, the daughter of the king Simha of Kusumapore by his queen Vimota. Dhanavati was trained in all the fine arts. It was the time of spring when there was new life and joy every where and one day, the princess entered the garden with her companions. A painter was found sitting under an Asoka tree with some pictures. "Never before," said Kamalini to the painter, taking one of the pictures from him, "I saw such a picture. Who is this man in the picture?" "Have you not heard of the Prince Dhana of Achalapore? It is he who is represented in this picture." Kamalini, who was the companion of Dhanavati took the picture. The princess was attentively looking at the picture when the words reached her ears, "The prince Dhana of Achalapore is the man in the picture."

A very sharp shaft which Cupid threw at the princess that day all unnoticed, began to ail her ceaselessly since that time.

"The princess is fairly advanced in years,—who would be her proper husband?"—this was one day the uppermost thought in king Simha's mind when the messenger who had come just then from Achalapore, told

him among other things, "Up till now, I have seen hundreds of fine youngmen but none so beautiful and accomplished as the Prince of Achalapore. Not to speak of men, —I doubt if there is any one like him among the Devas and the Vidyadharas." A great burden seemed to be removed from the king Simha's mind. He ordered the very same messenger to go to Achalapore with the proposal of Dhanavati's marriage with the prince Dhana

"Sister,—you are going to be married"—Chandravati, the younger sister of Dhanavati said to Dhanavati, joyfully.

"Who told you so?"

"I have heard every thing. The father sends the messenger to Achalapore just now"

"The messenger is sent on some other errand."

"Certainly not."

Kamalini came in at this time and said, "What is the use of quarrelling thus! I shall call the messenger himself."

Nothing was nearer to Dhanavati's heart.

"I am going to Achalapore," said the messenger, "with the proposal of the princess marriage."



"Here is a private letter for the Prince, to be delivered to him privately," said Kamalini

The messenger went away

Vikramadhana agreed to the marriage proposal quite readily. The messenger was very clever, he handed over the letter to the Prince when he was about to return. Dhanavati is writing,—

"On the hudding youth, the autumnal season has poured all its treasure. The Lily, however, is gloomy all the same,—She craves the Sun to take her by the hands."

Dhanakumara took no time in understanding the purport of the letter. He wrote in reply —

"Know this for certain that the Sun is glad to have the Lily. This is the law of nature, why then, should the one party be on her knees to the other?"

With the reply, the Prince gave his own necklace of costly jewels to the messenger as a present to the Princess.

At the appointed time, the marriage of Dhana with Dhanavati was performed with great splendour.

There was a beautiful forest in those days, not very far from Achalapore where there was a pious anchorita, Vasundhara by name. One day, the king Vikramadhana with his queen, his son and the princess Dhanavati went to him to listen to his religious instructions. "Will your holiness be pleased to tell me," said the king, "what is indicated by the fact that the mango-plant in Dharini's dream is to bear choicest fruits for nine times?" To supply the answer to the king's question, the sage Vasundhara by the exercise of his superhuman powers, immediately approached an Omniscient Being. He got the answer from him and communicated it to the astounded monarch, "Dhanakumara is not an ordinary man. He will have nine auspicious incarnations one after the other and will be a Tirthamkara finally. This is the meaning of the queen's dream." All wondered at what Vasundhara said.

Prince Dhana was swimming in a tank one day with Dhanavati when the latter noticed a saint lying unconscious at the foot of an Asoka tree near by. At once the princely couple ran to the saint and began to try their best to revive him. With their

care, the saint came to consciousness again when he said, "I am a sage, Munichandra by name. While wandering with my preceptor, I lost the way and fell unconscious. I am indebted to you to-day for my life. What shall I say? Such is the course of the world. Time is sure to come to every body when he finds himself in untoward circumstances. For this reason, one should be virtuous in this world so that the future may not be painful. Be you all happy!" Dhana and Dhanavati learnt the code of a householder's duties at Vasundhara's feet.

Upon the death of Vikramadbana, Dhana ascended the throne of Achalapore. Both King Dhana and Queen Dhanavati were noted for the purity of their lives.

"The sage Vasundhara has come," intimated the master of the royal gardens one day.

The royal pair received the sage with great respect. Vasundhara was well pleased and revealed to them the mysteries of religion. His instructions made the king and the queen develop a spirit of renunciation. They put the prince Jayanta on the throne and entered the Order. With them, two of their relatives, Dhanadatta and

Dhanadeva also renounced the world. They all took to religious austerities, self-control and practice of penances.

Upon their death here, King Dhana and Queen Dhanavati were born as gods in the Soudharma heaven; their relations also went to heaven.

Nothing is permanent in this world. Time came when the life of Dhana and Dhanavati as gods in the heaven came to an end.

King Sura ruled over the kingdom of Sura-tijas-pore in the northern range of the Vaitadhyamountains in the Bharata Kshetra. When Dhana lost the status of a god in the Soudharma heaven, he was given birth to by Vidhyunmati, the queen of Sura and was named Chitragati. Siva-mandira-pore was the country in the southern range of the Vaitadhyamountains and Dhanavati was born as Ratnavati, the daughter of its king Ananga-simha by his queen Sasi-prabha. Both Chitragati and Ratnavati were highly accomplished and well-versed in the various arts.

When Ratnavati came of age, her father was anxious to get a suitable bride-groom for her. A prognostician, however told him

"That man who would be able to snatch off from your hands that excellent sword which is with you and on whose head there would be a rain of flowers at the time of his adoring the Siddhayatana would be your son-in-law." The king was satisfied that the husband of the princess would be a great man at once powerful and pious.

The king Sugriva of Chakrapore had Bhadra as one of his queens. Her son Padma was a wicked prince while Sumitra, the king's son by his other wife Yasasvati was not only dear to all but was really a very able and good man. Bhadra saw that Sumitra was sure to be the king upon the death of Sugriva and that there was no chance for her son, Padma. She grew extremely envious of Sumitra and one day, she actually administered poison to the prince Sumitra who thereupon fell pale and senseless.

At once there was the uproar in the royal palace that it was none but Bhadra who had poisoned Sumitra, and Bhadra escaped.

All sorts of medicine were tried—yet Sumitra could not be restored to life. King Sugriva cried piteously. Just at this time, the prince Chitrangada was flying by that

place in a Vimana or aeroplane. He got down there on hearing the cries of the king. He revived Sumitra with sanctified water to the great joy of the royal family. Since that time, Sumitra and Chitrageeta became fast friends.

Suyash was a great saint who, while explaining the principles of morality one day before Sumitra, Sugriva, Chitrageeta and others, said "Bhadra fled from this place and entered a forest. The Bheelas there took away all her ornaments and made her over to the headman of a village. That man sold her to a merchant. Bhadra fled away from that merchant's house. While running in the forest, she was burnt to death. She is now suffering untold pains in the first hell. In her next birth, she will be the wife of a Chandala and will be envied by her husband's other wife, as soon as she will be pregnant. She will be assassinated by that woman and will be thrown into the third hell. Long ages after, she will have the life of a sub-human being. It seems as if there is no end to her miseries." Prince Sumitra was extremely sorry to hear all this. It was due to him that Bhadra was to suffer so much! King Sugriva, however, consoled his son

On hearing, however, the unfortunate effects of vicious acts, the king resolved to leave the worldly life. He put Sumitra on the throne and entered the holy Order in quest of the Infinite !

As soon as Sumitra became the king, he gave over a part of his kingdom to his step-brother Padma. But the wretch was not satisfied with this. All on a sudden, he went away some day,—full of anger and spite. Chitragati went back to his father's kingdom.

King Anangasimha had a son named Kamala who had an eye on the queen of Kalinga. Unable to control himself, the wicked prince one day actually took away the beautiful queen. The king of Kalinga was at a loss to know what to do. The queen, however, was the sister of Sumitra who was very sorry to hear the abduction of his sister. Chitragati asked his friend to take heart and swore that the sister must be rescued.

On enquiry, Chitragati came to know that Anangasimha's son Kamala was the author of this shameful act. At once he started for Siva-mandira-pore and killed Kamala in an open fight. Anangasimha, grieved and angry at the death of his son,

went out to fight but could not defeat Chitrageatı in spite of his best efforts. His exasperation and spirit of revenge knew no bounds. He took out his fiery brilliant sword and ran towards Chitrageatı to kill him. Chitrageatı was very clever, by dint of his superhuman powers, he at once created dense deep darkness and made Anangasimha absolutely motionless. He snatched off the sword from the hand of Anangasimha and then went to his friend Sumitra with his sister.

When the darkness was over Anangasimha thought within himself—"Who is this enemy? Who is he who could so easily take off the sword from my hand? Is this man the would be son in law of mine? Where shall I get him?" He remembered "the man on whom there would be a shower of flowers at the time of his adoring the Siddhayatana, would be the son in law." Engrossed in such thoughts, Anangasimha came back to his kingdom.

Sumitra was glad to have his sister back. He, however, could not feel peace. The course of the world was so bad—at the instigation of passions, man does not shrink from behaving as a beast. A spirit of strong



renunciation permeated his mind and putting his son on the throne he took initiation under the sage Suyash.

In a quiet and lonely place outside a village in the country of Magadha Sumitra was found one day lost in contemplation. He had no perception of the external world then. All on a sudden a sharp arrow, from the bow of an enemy flew to him and pierced his heart. His meditation was disturbed at the intense pain and he saw that it was his step brother who thus killed him. The peaceful saint did not lose his temper. He thought that he was wrong in not giving Padma the entire kingdom and that he had harmed him indeed. 'Padma,—Padma—for give me —with this Sumitra died a peaceful death. On account of his virtuous life, he went to the Brahma loka while the wicked Padma, while going on the way, was bit by a cobra and was thrown into the seventh hell.

Chitrageat was extremely sad at the death of Sumitra. With a heavy heart, he went to the Siddhayatana where, it so happened that King Anangasimha also had come at that time with his daughter. On hearing that his friend Chitrageat had come to Siddhayatana Sumitra (as god) also

arrived there Chitragati worshipped the Lord Arhat with great veneration when Sumitra and his associate gods poured down showers of flowers upon him All were astonished Attracted by the beauty and the achievement of Chitragati, Ratnavati surrendered herself to him

King Anangasimha recognised that it was this beautiful prince with whom he had fought and who had snatched off the sword from him He saw that at the Siddhayatana it was upon this prince that flowers were showered He resolved that Chitragati would be the husband of his daughter

As soon as Anangasimha came back to his kingdom, he sent a messenger to Chitragati's father

Chitragati and Ratnavati were duly married

At the termination of their heavenly lives, Dhanadeva and Dhanadatta were born as brothers of Chitragati,—Manogati and Chapala-gati by names The pious Chitragati with his wife and brothers made a sojourn to Nandisvara and other holy places When his father entered the Order, he became the king

Manichurha was a feudatory chief under

**Chitragati** When Manichurha died, there was a severe quarrel among his sons, Sasi and Sura over their father's property. King Chitragati acted as the mediator and divided the estate equitably between them and gave much pious instruction to them. Still, the dispute did not end and both of them fought with each other and died. When the news was communicated to king Chitragati, a feeling of intense renunciation arose within him and he thought within himself,—How dangerous is the course of the world! The lust for wealth leads to untold miseries!

**Purandara** was the eldest son of Chitragati. He put him on the throne and got himself initiated with his wife and brothers. They observed the rules of right conduct and were born as gods in the Mahendra heaven upon the termination of their human lives.

### III

At the termination of his heavenly life, Chitragati was born on this earth as Aparajita, the son of King Harinaadi of Simhapore in the western Videha. The minister's son Vimala-bodha was a close friend of his. The prince was well-versed in all the branches of learning and was of a bold and adventurous nature.

Not being frightened at the loneliness of the distant forest where he was brought by the ill trained horse one day, the prince Aparajita told his friend Vimala-bodha, "Had not the horse been so out of control, we would have been deprived of the enjoyment of such a fine forest! Unknown as the place is, I am very happy to have come here "

' Save me,—save me,'—a man came running before the prince, extremely frightened and crying piteously. The prince readily took him in his protection, saying "Do not be afraid "

"My friend, prince," said Vimala-bodha, ' you ought to have seen first whether the man is good or bad before you agreed to give him protection '

"To save a man in danger, craving protection, is the noble and time-honoured practice of a Kshatriya, said the prince firmly

Just then a band of police officers with drawn swords rushed in and cried,—' Move off—this man is a robber flying from the town after his misdeed, we will cut him to pieces "

" Even Indra shall not be able to take

him away from me to day, this man is under my protection" The officers stopped for a moment at these fiery words of the prince. Next moment there was a fight in which all of them were defeated by Aparajita. Struck at the wonderful fighting skill of the prince, the officers went back and reported every thing to their ruler. The king of Kosala became angry and hurried to the forest, himself at the head of his army. Aparajita put the robber under the care of Vimala-bodha and went out alone to the fight. Every one was astonished at his prowess and skill in wielding arms. "Who is this young man?"—this thought arose at last in the mind of the king.

One of the ministers of the king of Kosala knew Aparajita. He came to recognise the prince and told his king who that bold fighter was. At once the king stopped fighting and addressing Aparajita said,—“well,—you are the son of my friend, Harinandi! I did not know this before.” He greeted him and took him to his town.

With great splendour, was celebrated the marriage of the princess Kanakamala with Aparajita.

An adventurous spirit, however, cannot remain long immersed in idle pleasures and so Aparajita went out with Vimala bodha from Kosala

It was a dark night and the prince was going with the minister's son on an unknown way, pushing, as it were, the thick mass of darkness that was around them. A temple of the goddess Kalika was indistinctly seen, not very far. Suddenly, there was a piteous cry, "Alas, alas, is there no man in this world?" It seemed that the voice was that of a woman. Aparajita ran towards that direction with lightning speed.

A blaze of fire was burning furiously and near it, a woman, trembling with fear was standing before a monster of man who was up with a naked sword. The woman was heard uttering,—“If there be a man here, let him save me from the clutches of this wicked Vidyadhara.” The Vidyadhara raised aloft his scimitar which flashed out at the light of fire.

The prince came running with the words,—‘Beast, be ready for the fight,—no use in exercising your shameful prowess on a helpless lady.’ The Vidyadhara was

extremely vexed at this and began to fight with Aparajita. The fighting went on for the whole of the night,—neither party seemed to have been defeated. At last, when the sun's rays glistened in the eastern sky and the birds screamed out, the Vidyadhara fell senseless at a severe stroke from the prince's sword.

At the light of the dawn, the prince, mad with the fury of war, seemed to look the more beautiful and the lady never turned away her wistful eyes from him. The sharpest shaft of Cupid pierced her heart.

The chivalrous Aparajita began to serve and nurse the wounded Vidyadhara and brought him back to consciousness at last.

"You may fight now, if you so like," said he.

"I have been defeated.—I acknowledge it, O prince," replied the Vidyadhara, "I see you have saved me from the sin of killing a woman. Will you do one thing for me now? There is a small jewel, tied at the end of my cloth; take it out, rub it in water and apply the ointment to my wounds." The prince did, as he was asked and the Vidyadhara was all right soon.

"Listen to me, O prince," he now said,

"I am Surakanta, son of Srishena, a Vidya-dhara. This girl is the daughter of Amritasena, king of Ratha-nupurapura, named Ratnamala. A prognostician had declared that Ratnamala was to be the wife of Aparajita, son of king Harinandi. From the time she heard this, she became the lady of Aparajita at heart. Her beauty, her accomplishments, however, made me mad. I have requested her to marry me, for times without number. Do you know how she used to answer my offer? With pride, she used to say,—'Either Aparajita would be my husband, or Fire shall burn me!' At times, I used to be extremely angry but then I took to entreating her again. When, however, I found that I was not to succeed, I brought her down here in a revengeful mood and was determined to cut her to pieces and throw those pieces into the fire. You have saved her, you have saved me too, from the sin of killing a woman. I praise your bravery. Who are you?"

Vimala-bodha then said who the prince was. Ratnamala's happiness knew no bounds. When the news of the last night was out, Queen Kirtimati and king Amritasena, the parents of Ratnamala, hastened to the spot.



Ratnamala was married to Aparajita amidst great rejoicings

While returning, Surakanta made a present to Aparajita of the jewel which healed all wounds and a *Grutika*, a thing that enabled the possessor to change his appearance in any way he liked

Aparajita went out again with Vimalabodha

One day in a thick forest, the prince was extremely thirsty, so much so that unable to proceed any further he sat down under a tree. The minister's son went out in search of water and soon returned with water. But he did not see the prince on his return.

Extremely sorry at not meeting his friend, he searched for him hither and thither and became senseless. Regaining consciousness, he again set out on search but found his friend nowhere. The world seemed to be a void to him without the prince. He arrived at Nandipore in search of Aparajita. He met two Vidyadharis here who told him,—  
 “Vimalabodha! Do not grieve any more. Our king Bhubana bhahu has two daughters, Kamalini and Kumudini. Wise men have divined that these two princesses would be

the brides of Aparajita and they have told the king so Prince Aparajita has been taken away at the king's order, he is now with our king Bhuvanabhanu But the prince is so very sorry at missing you that he does not speak to any body,—not to speak of consenting to the marriage You better go now and we are sure that as soon as you go, the marriage will be celebrated."

The two Vidyadharas did not speak falsely On the arrival of Vimāla-bodha, the Vidyadhara princesses were married to Aparajita

Aparajita started with his friend again

There was a great uproar in the royal palace of Sri mandira-pore,—“King Suprava has been stabbed by some unknown miscreant” Many doctors and physicians came in and tried their skill Their efforts, however, proved fruitless and the king's death seemed to be inevitable At this time, a public woman, named Kama-lata came in and told the prime minister, “I see, a beautiful young man, resembling a heavenly being, is staying in this city for some days He seems to possess some medicine Why should you not try him?” It is needless to

say that this young man was none other than the prince Aparajita

Aparajita knew all this from before. When he was taken to the dying king he took pity on him and washed his wound with the water of Surakanta's jewel. Soon the king was strong enough to sit up,—his wound was healed up and he was perfectly cured. When he came to know who Aparajita was, he welcomed him to his house. King Harinandi had been a friend of Suprabha and this friendship was now strengthened by the marriage of Suprabha's daughter, Rambha with the prince Aparajita.

Aparajita set out on his travels again and came to Kundapore. He met with an omniscient being there. This sage gave him many holy instructions and told him among other things that the soul wanders in this miserable series of existence on account of its bondage to Karma and that as soon as the Karma ties are sundered, the soul is emancipated. Aparajita listened to the teachings of the sage with rapt attention and asked him, "Sir, am I *Bhavya* (capable of getting final emancipation) soul? Shall I get Liberation?" Nothing was unknown to the sage. He told him frankly that he was such

a fortunate soul and that he would be a Tirthankara in his fifth incarnation thence when his friend Vimala-bodha would be a Ganadhara or leader of the assembly Aparajita was very glad to hear this

On account of their pious deeds, King Jitasatru and queen Dharini of Jananandapore had got Ratnavati—now named Pritimati—as their daughter Pritimati was well-versed in all the arts Struck at the princess' vast erudition and accomplishments, King Jitasatru in consultation with her, declared that he would marry his daughter to one who would be able to defeat her in a disputation At this proclamation the kings and the princes of the time began to learn the arts very eagerly

There was a great assembly in which the princess Pritimati was to choose her husband Princes from far and near came to that assembly King Harinandi only was conspicuous by his absence, as he was very sad not to see his son for so long a time It so happened that the prince Aparajita after his travels in many countries, arrived at Jananandapore at that time He had the Gutika of Surakanta with him, by means of which he was enabled to appear in such a

way that people took him for an ordinary man. None could recognise that he was a prince.

Surrounded by her companions, the princess Pritimati entered the assembly when all the princes present were astonished at her uncommon beauty. Malati, a maid of honour, then began to introduce to the princess, the assembled princes one by one. Curiously, however, none of the princes succeeded in defeating Pritimati in disputations. King Jitasatru was extremely sorry at this for he found it impossible to get a bridegroom for his daughter under the circumstances. He proclaimed for the last time,—“Of the kings and the princes, whoever will be able to defeat Pritimati in disputations, will be her husband.”

Aparajita thought that there was no real gain if a man were successful in a disputation with a lady. At the same time, he was determined to vanquish the princess, although there was no manliness in it.

Accordingly the prince approached the princess to open the debate. Although he was very poorly clad at the time, Pritimati felt an attraction for him suddenly. This

was of course due to the love, persisting through various incarnations. In the debate that was held, the princess had to acknowledge defeat and she threw a garland round the prince's neck.

The fact that an unknown, ill-clad beggar would win the hands of the princess, was too much for the assembled princes. They ran at him and there ensued a furious battle. But every one was thunderstruck at Aparajita's wonderful skill in arms. He rushed against king Somaprabha, who, however, recognised him at last and desisting from war began to talk with him in friendly terms. This led to the recognition of Aparajita by all and the battle was finally stopped. The prince now assumed his natural appearance and married Pritimati formally. The minister of Jananandapore also gave his daughter in marriage to Vimala bodha.

By this time, king Harinandi came to know that Aparajita was staying at Jananandapore. The father pining at the long absence of his son sent an ambassador to the court of Jitasatru. Almost sobbing, the messenger told the prince how his father was full of grief and that he ought to go

back to him as soon as possible. Accordingly, Aparajita with Pritimati and other princesses, previously married to him, went back to his father's kingdom, Simhapore.

When his father entered the Order, Aparajita ascended the throne. Pritimati was his chief queen and Vimala-bodha, his minister. King Aparajita had two brothers, Suran and Soma who had been Manogati and Vimalagati and who had incarnated in this earth after the termination of their lives in the Mahendra heaven. These two brothers were very dear to Aparajita. King Aparajita meted out fatherly treatment to his subjects who loved and respected him because of his pious deeds of public utility.

One day, the king was walking in his garden when some one attracted his notice. "It seems," said he, "that this man is very wealthy. Look, how he is attended by numerous friends and relatives. See, how he is lavishly giving away money to the poor. How loudly he is being praised! Can you tell me who he is?"

An attendant of the king replied "Sire, he is Anangadeva, son of a merchant, Samudrapala."

"I am fortunate," said the king, to have such rich and pious people in my dominion "

Next day, the king was again moving in the same garden when he saw four men carrying a dead body towards the cremation ground. Ladies and friends of the dead man were beating their breasts and crying loudly. "Who is this man?" asked the king.

"Sir," replied the king's attendants, "It is Anangadeva whom you saw yesterday. He died of cholera. People are going to burn his dead body now."

Aparajita returned to his palace that day with a heavy heart. A sort of melancholy, a spirit of renunciation and indifference towards the worldly life overtook him. Some days after this incident, the omniscient sage of Kundapore paid a visit to him. He listened to his religious instructions very attentively. He now installed his son, Padma as the king and became a homeless wanderer, accompanied by Pritimati, Vimolabodha, Sura and Soma. On account of their austere lives and practice of strict penances, they, after their deaths here, were born as gods in the Arana heaven.



## IV

The city of Hastinapore was situated in the Kurudesa within Bharata-kshetra which was included in Jambu-dvipa. Sri-shena was the king of Hastinapore and Srimati was his queen. The queen saw in a dream one night that the full moon was, as it were entering into her mouth. Wise men who knew how to explain the phenomena, soon in a dream assured the king that he would have a son who would resemble the full moon in the splendid beauty of his person. Their prediction came to be true. Sri-shena named the prince Samuha. The prince when he came of age, was a wise, prudent and mighty man. It is needless to mention that the prince Samuha was none other than Aparajita.

"Sire," represented a deputation of villagers one day to King Srishena, "there is a mountain named Bisalasringa near the border of your dominion which is connected with the river, Chandrasisira. In the cave of that mountain, protected by that river, lives a robber named Samaraketu, who often commits robbery in our houses. Always afraid of him, we have no peace." The king who had the good of his subjects in his heart,

at once made himself ready for war. The prince Samkha, however, dissuaded him saying, "It does not look well that you should yourself march against an insignificant robber. Let me go and teach him a good lesson."

Samaraketu was a clever man. When he heard that the prince was coming against him, he left the fortress with all his men and remained concealed in a mountain fastness. Prince Samkha, however, understood the trick: so he asked one of his generals to take possession of the fortress with some men and himself moved a little way off with his soldiers unaware of the tactics of the prince. Samaraketu came out with his men and surrounded the fortress,—sure, that Samkha would surrender in no time. Suddenly, however, Samkha appeared with his soldiers and fell upon the followers of Samaraketu. On the other hand, the general of Samkha who was within the fortress, came out and charged Samaraketu furiously. Samaraketu was signally defeated and surrendered to the prince. He was made to restore all things which he had taken from the villagers.

It was night time and prince Samkha was lying in his tent, when he heard a

distant piteous cry. From the nature of the sound, he understood that an old lady was moaning. He went out and saw the old woman who told him that Yāsomatī, the daughter of the king Jitari of Champa in Anga had desired to marry the prince Samkha but that a Vidyadhara prince named Manisekhara, mad at the bewitching beauty of the princess, had stolen her away. The old lady was the princess' nurse; she was left on the way by the Vidyadhara and was crying continually at the disappearance of the princess. "Lady," said the prince Samkha, "do not cry. I will rescue the princess."

The prince searched for Yāsomati, far and near, in the forest for the whole of the night but saw no trace either of the princess or of the Vidyadhara. At morning, he climbed a hill known as Visala-sringa and carefully looked on all sides,—when in a distant cave movements of living beings were perceived by him. With the speed of lightning, the prince ran towards that direction. On approaching the cave he heard a lady saying, "Why are you asking for it in vain? None is to be my lord, save and except the prince Samkha." At once, the prince entered

the cave At his sight, the lady's face became brightened The man near her roared, 'Yasomatī' I will kill the man whom you love under your very nose and take possession of you by force'

A furious battle ensued between Samkha and Manisekhara, in which the latter was defeated

At the termination of the fight, Manisekhara took the prince to his city From that place, Samkha made a pilgrimage to Siddhayatana where he worshipped the venerable with great devotion Struck at the beauty and the accomplishments of the prince, the Vidyadharas offered their daughters to Samkha, but Samkha told all that he would marry none before he was married to the princess Yasomatī

Accordingly, the Vidyadharas brought Samkha and Yasomatī before the king Jitari He celebrated the marriage of Yasomatī with Samkha with great pomp and splendour After this, the Vidyadhara princesses were married to Samkha

Samkha came back to Hastinapore with his brides

This Yasomatī had been Pritimatī, the

queen of Aparajita in her previous life Sura and Soma, the brothers of Aparajita, were known as Yasodhara and Gunadhara brothers of Samkha, in their present life Vimala-bodha incarnated as the minister's son Matiprabha

King Srishena took imitation and on his entering the holy Order, Samkha became the king and endeared himself to all by his good rule and pious practices

Many years after, Srishena, now an omniscient sage, came back to Hastinapore He gave pious instructions to the king Samkha and astonished him by revealing to him the wonderful events of his past as well as his future lives Thereby, the king began to dislike the world Soon, he put his son Pundarika on the throne and entered the holy Order with Yasomati and others On account of his pious practices he acquired the Tirthamkara Karma i.e., Karma the inflow of which makes one a Tirthamkara in his next incarnation on this earth

On his death here Samuha ascended the Aparajita heaven

## V

The dynasty in which Samkha was reborn after his heavenly life was well known

as the dynasty of Hari. The kings of the Hari dynasty ruled at Mathura. There was a king named Yadu in this dynasty after whom, the Hari kings were called also the kings of the Yadu dynasty. Yadu's son was Sura who had Sauri and Suvira as his sons. Sauri gave his kingdom of Mathura to Suvira and himself founded a kingdom at Sauyapora in the Kusarta country. King Sauri had Andhaka-vrishni and others as his sons, while Bhoja-vrishni and others were the sons of Suvira. King Suvira gave his kingdom to prince Bhoja-vrishni and used to live in the city, Sauvirapora which he founded in the country of Sindhu. Bhoja-vrishni had a son, named Ugrasena, whose son was Kamsa. Andhaka vrishni had ten sons viz., Samudra-vijaya, Akshohhya, Stimita, Sagara, Himavan, Achala, Dharana, Purana, Abhichandra and Vasudeva. Besides these sons, Andhaka-vrishni had two daughters named Kunti and Madri, who were respectively married to Pandu and Dama ghosha. Krishna was the son of Vasudeva by his wife Devaki while Balabhadra was another son of Vasudeva by his wife Rohini. The sons of Pandu were known as the Pandavas, while Sisupala was the son of

Damaghosha Jarasandha was Kamsa's farther in-law. There was enmity between Jarasandha, Sisupala and Kamsa on the one side and Krishna on the other. The details of the wars between these contending parties are described in the Hari-vamsa-purana and are left out here. In his childhood, Krishna was brought up in the house of Nanda. When he came of age, he became renowned for his prowess and used to live at Dvaraka which he founded. He had many famous sons e.g. Samha, Pradyumna etc. Ugrasena's daughter, Satyahhama was one of his queens. King Ugrasena had another daughter named Rajmati by his wife Dharini. Rajmati was thus half-sister of Satyahhama. Rajmati had been Yasomati, the queen of Samkha in her previous incarnation on this earth. In respect of her beauty, accomplishments, learning, proficiency in fine arts and pious practices, Rajmati was matchless.

It was the twelfth day in the dark fortnight of the month of Kartika,—the moon was in the Chitra constellation. Towards close of that night, Siva devi, the queen of the King Samudravijaya of Sauryapore, saw many wonderful things in her dream, e.g. an elephant the goddess of wealth, a lion, a

bull etc. A wise sage of the day predicted that the king was to have the Tirthamkara, the Lord of all the three worlds, as his son. It was a fact, however, that at the time when the queen saw those things in her dream, Samkha came down from the Aparajita heaven and entered the womb of the queen Siva.

The queen felt absolutely no uneasiness during her pregnancy, her beauty and wisdom, rather, were on the increase daily: She gave birth to her illustrious son on the fifth bright night in the month of Sravana when the moon was in the Chitra constellation. The baby was brilliant like the Marakata diamond and all the auspicious signs were found on his body. The goddesses of the Points of Compass came and made the queen and her son clean. The Indra of the Soudhaima heaven arrived there with great joy and performed the Janma-kalyana or the birth celebration of the Lord. Before this celebration, the gods had performed the Garbha-kalyana at the time when the Lord had descended to the womb of Siva-devi. The king of the gods put a false child before Siva-devi and took away the real babe to the Meru-mountain. He seated the child on the



glowing Panduka-silta and poured the holy waters on him. The gods worshipped the child with great devotion and chanted sacred hymns before him. Then they brought back the child to the queen with great pomp. As the queen in a dream during her pregnancy had seen a brilliant car-wheel (Nemi) made of Arishta-diamond, the wonderful child was named by the loving parents Arishta-nemi.

Prince Arishta-nemi became proficient in all the arts and the branches of learning in a short time. He was devoid of all sense of pride and selfishness. He was extremely strong and powerful,—yet very meek. Notwithstanding the vastness of his learning, he was extremely unostentatious. Although a prince, he was averse to enjoyment of pleasures and though he was of very fine form, he shunned luxury. People wondered at the character and the conduct of Arishta-nemi.

The prowess and the wealth of Krishna knew no bounds. Gods had given him a wonderful wearing yellow cloth, a luminous crown bejewelled with stars, the bright Kaustubha diamond, the strong bow known as Sarnga, a pair of quivers inexhaustibly filled with arrows, a wonderful sword named

Nandaka, a strong mace known as Kanmodaki, a fast car with the divine bird Garuda upon it. Surrounded by his queens who resembled the flash of lightning, Krishna appeared as the Indra on earth

One day, the king Samudravijaya and the queen Sivadevi called their son lovingly, aside and addressed him, "Prince, you are our joy, embodied, marry, now, a princess to your taste and make our joy completely full "

"Sire," said the prince meekly," really good damsels are not so common Every woman is in a sense, a source of a man's woe. If I get a really good girl, I shall marry,—but not now "

The royal pair found no words for answer

The strength and power of Arishtanemi too, were unknown to none The skill in arms, displayed by the prince in the wars with Jarasandha etc astonished all the friends and the foes even Krishna and Balabhadra

One day,—no body knew why—the prince Nemi, according to his own sweet

will and pleasure, entered the hall in which Krishna's arms were kept. None could use the weapons there, save and except Krishna. Arishtanemi stared at the wonderful conch-shell of Krishna, known as Panchajanya. Charu-Krishna, the master of the arm-house said, "Prince,—you are no doubt a cousin of our lord Krishna and a strong man too. But none can blow the conch except Krishna. It is doubtful even, if you can raise that conch up,—not to speak of blowing it." Arishtanemi smiled.

All on a sudden, there was a dreadful sound, resembling the roaring of a stormy sea,—a sound which shook Dvaraka from corner to corner. The forts, ramparts, palaces and mountain-peaks in it,—all trembled. The heroes of the Yadu family were overwhelmed with weird fears; elephants, horses etc began to run to and fro in fear. There was a great uproar in Dvaraka. "Whose is this conch blow?"—thought Krishna, "Is there any imperial rival of mine on this earth? Or, has Indra, the king of the gods, descended here?" There is none in this world whose heart is not trembled at the furious sound of my conch-blow but who is this powerful being whose conch-blow has

filled my heart, even the heart of Balabhadra, with fears?"

"Sire," said the guards of the arm-house "The prince Arishtanemi has to-day blown the Panchajanya conch of yours, so easily."

Prince Nemi arrived at the place.

Krishna greeted the prince quite heartily and then said in a solemn tone,—“Nemi, none but myself could blow this great conch of mine; to-day, however, you have shown an uncommon power in you by blowing this very conch, I am glad at this. But you have to do something more—”

Arishtanemi looked at Krishna fearlessly. Krishna went on saying—

“But something more you are to do, Nemi. You shall have to fight with me. It is to be decided, which of the prince Krishna of Dvaraka and Arishtanemi, is more powerful.”

Krishna could not be moved from this firm decision of his. Accordingly, Arishtanemi was compelled to agree to fight with him.

The two heroes of the Yadu dynasty then, entered into the arm-house, to take

never to oppose him. You should never question nor stop him,—even if he mix intimately with the ladies of my household." And, then, he told Satyahhama and his other queens, "Well, Arishtanemi is your brother-in-law; he is absolutely untouched by sin; you may freely talk and jest with him." Krishna used to take Nemi with him wherever he went. His glee seemed to be unbounded whenever he could make Nemi glad. Daily and nightly, Krishna thought how he would succeed in drawing Arishtanemi into the pleasures of the world. And the prince Nemi,—O, surrounded as he was by the most tempting of the luxuries of life, he used to move,—absolutely free from all desires!

## VI

On a pleasant day in spring, Krishna went to the beautiful hill-grove of Raivata, accompanied by Arishtanemi. The ladies of his royal household also were there and there was nothing but joy there. Krishna put a garland of flowers on the neck of Nemi, with sincere affection. Then, by previous arrangement, as it were, the beautiful ladies tried to tempt the prince Nemi in all possible ways. Some put flowery ornaments on his

head, some, on his ears, some, on his hands. One of the princesses went so far as to touch the prince in a most tempting manner with the tips of her heaving breasts. The prince, however, remained as indifferent as ever!

It was a fairly hot day and Krishna went down in a tank with his ladies to play with them in its cool waters. At the request of Krishna, Nemi, perfectly indifferent to all that was going on, came down in the tank. The ladies were extremely joyous at having the prince Nemi in their midst. "How will you run away, now, Cousin?"—they began to throw water on him, all laughing and surrounding him. Some of them threw lilies at his person, some, lily-creepers around his neck. Some of the ladies touched him, some caught his arm and one of them actually threw her arms around his neck. "Let me see," thought Krishna, "if I succeed in bringing Nemi back to the world, in this way."

After the play in the pond was over, the princess Rukmini removed the water from Nemi's body with her own hands and seated him on a jewelled seat. "Look here, my dearest cousin," said the clever Satya-

arms To test the respective might of the two contending princes, the Yadavas assembled in hundreds Arishtanemi was a man of very soft heart Suddenly he saw that Krishna would bleed if he were struck with weapons and would suffer indescribable pain therefor Prince Nemi resolved—There should be no duel with Krishna with weapons in hand

The heart of Arishtanemi was a veritable fountain of mercy He thought,—“How can there be a wrestling even, with Krishna? My kicks and fists may cause fracture in his body”

After thinking for a while in this way, prince Nemi said at last,—“It does not become of us to enter into war with each other either with weapons in hands or in wrestling The might of our arms would show our respective strength” Krishna agreed to this proposal

Krishna then firmly stiffened his own arm which, however, Nemi bent easily, to the wonder and applause of the Yadavas present Arishtanemi now held out his left hand With all his best efforts, Krishna could not move a little that great arm he

could not bend it even by hanging himself down it. The people of Dvaraka cried out in deafening applause. The test of the respective strength of Krishna and Nemi, was finally done.

Krishna now embraced Nemi affectionately and addressing him said, "Nemi,—backed by your wonderful prowess, as I am, I look upon the world as an insignificant straw!" With all this however, there lurked a secret fear in Krishna that someday Arishtanemi might stand as a rival against him. One day he expressed his fear plainly before Balabhadra, who, however, corrected him saying, "Arishtanemi is no doubt possessed of superhuman strength. But we have got nothing to fear from him. There is not even a shade of greed in him, any the least desire for enjoying the kingdom. Know for certain, that peace loving graceful young man is ever in search of the way to the eternal peace!"

From that day onward, the love and respect of Krishna for Nemi, increased a thousand-fold. "Remember, Nemi is my cousin, my brother" he commanded his officers, "his character is purity itself. He would move, wherever he would,—you are



never to oppose him. You should never question nor stop him,—even if he mix intimately with the ladies of my household'. And, then, he told Satynbhama and his other queens, "Well, Arishtanemi is your brother in law, he is absolutely untouched by sin, you may freely talk and jest with him." Krishna used to take Nemi with him wherever he went. His glee seemed to be unbounded whenever he could make Nemi glad. Daily and nightly, Krishna thought how he would succeed in drawing Arishtanemi into the pleasures of the world. And the prince Nemi,—O, surrounded as he was by the most tempting of the luxuries of life, he used to move,—absolutely free from all desires!

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bhama now. "Your cousin spends his time cheerfully in the company of so many of us,—can't—you, in your part get hold of a bride? Your youth is blooming, you have a fine form—What is the harm if you get a bride? Are you ignorant of every thing? Are you devoid of all finer feelings? Or, are you a eunuch? What is the good of living a bachelor's life, like a flower 'wasting its fragrance in the desert air?' The first Lord, the blessed Tirthamkhra,—he also got married. Your parents pressed you for marriage and you thought it fit not to accede to their request. Your cousin also asks you to marry, you don't like his prayer too. But you cannot refuse to do what we say. Let me tell you plainly,—marry you must, enter the world and after a married life of good many years, you may go to the forests and practise penances, if you like "

Princess Jambabati went a step further and said, "Look here, cousin,—Muni Suvrata was not only married but had children. All the same, he attained the state of a Tirthamkara. This leads me to conclude that a married life is a condition precedent to one's getting the final Emancipation. I fail to understand how you can

hope to attain Liberation without being married

“ Sister, Sister, —said Satyahhama feigning to get angry What is the use of talking to him thus ? He does not like his father mother, his noble cousin, even us, his well-wishing kins I see, he is a man who is not to be dealt with leniently,—he is not to be brought round without punishment Let us arrest him to day,—he is not to be let off unless he consents to his marriage ”

“ Softly, softly,—not so, said the princess Lakshmana, ‘ We need not take so much trouble Our cousin is not a bad man that he would go against our wishes Let us explain everything and he would agree to marry ”

Just at this time Krishna arrived there

Nemi, said he earnestly ‘ please do what we say do not wound any more heart of your parents our good uncle and aunt Do not refuse to marry ’

Arishtanemi who was very meek and polite by nature was astonished at the way in which matters were developing He saw how people not being satisfied with the sufferings they experienced in this world,

brought other persons into this whirlpool of misery. He knew that the marriage of Rishabha-Deva, the first Tirthamkara was but the inevitable effect of deeds, done by him in his previous incarnation. He failed to see why it was necessary for him to marry and how it would be possible for him to attain Liberation if he got himself married. But Nomi could not utter anything in protest,—his natural meekness gagged him. At once, it was given out that Arishtanemi had at last consented to marry.

In the tone of an imperial conqueror of the world, princess Satyabhama addressed Krishna, saying,

“I have a younger sister, Rajmati, she alone is the fit bride for our cousin. My sister is unrivalled among the princesses of the world just as our cousin is so among the princes.

Krishna went to Ugrasena and settled everything with regard to the marriage of Arishtanemi with Rajmati.

It was the rainy season. King Samudravijaya called in a prognostician and told him, “Sir, be pleased to find an auspicious day for a marriage festival.”

"Sire," said the prognosticator, "one should not perform any auspicious festival at all during the rainy season,—far less, a marriage ceremony."

"I am sorry," said the king, "I cannot wait. Let us have a good day as near as possible."

The sixth bright day of the month of Sravana was accordingly settled as the day of marriage of the prince Nemi.

Krishna himself performed the holy preliminaries of the marriage of both Rajimati and Nemi.

On the day of marriage, prince Nemi started out on a splendid car, drawn by white horses. He was followed by Krishna, Balabhadra and other princes of Yadu dynasty. Soon the grand palace of Ugrasena was in sight.

A companion of the princess Rajimati told her, "A prince like Nemi is uncommon, you are singularly fortunate in being his bride." And when the pompous marital procession drew near, the companion took the princess to the window, saying, "See for yourself the man whom you are to marry." Both sat near the window.

Rajimati kept her eyes on her lord with rapt attention. A weird thought suddenly crossed her mind, "Am I really so fortunate as to be given in marriage to the yonder best of men?" All on a sudden, her right eye trembled,—trembled her right arm too,—a storm of unknown despair blew in her heart. The princess burst out in sobs. "What is that?" said her companion, "Should you weep in such an auspicious time? Gods bless you! May they remove the evils! Look, the bridegroom arrives! Stop,—should you weep in such a time?"

"Lo, driver," said Arishtanemi, when his car drew near the royal palace of Ugrasena,— "What is that sound?"

"Nothing of importance," answered the charioteer, "it is the cry of beasts in apprehension of the danger to their lives,—the beasts that have been brought by the king Ugrasena, for the meat of our dishes."

At once the soft heart of Arishtanemi melted. He commanded, "Stop the car."

The prince got down from the car and went with his charioteer to the place where those beasts were kept confined. The unfortunate creatures were tied—some at their

necks, some at their feet, some around their ribs. Their eyes had marks of fear stamped on them and they were all trembling. They raised their heads and turned to Nemi,—as if they wanted to appeal to him,—“O save us, save us, Lord!”

A feeling of intense sympathy choked the voice of Arishtanemi, who called, “charioteer!”

“My lord!”

“Unloose the ties of all of them.”

The charioteer did immediately what he was told. The beasts ran out at their pleasure,—mad at their freedom.

“My lord! said the charioteer, “be pleased to come to the palace of Ugrasena now.”

“No driver,” said Arishtanemi firmly, “turn back my chariot. I will go home.”

The charioteer could not understand what the prince meant and he stood, staring at the prince’s face.”

King Samudra-Vijaya, Rama Krishna, queen Siva-devi, Rohini, Devaki,—all hastened to the spot where Nemi was standing. The prince however, was found firm and



unmoved ! To the requests and entreaties of his relatives, he replied, " No, marry I will not I will not willingly throw a noose around my neck Don't you see how these beasts are running to and fro,—joyous at their freedom ? I have got to remove the Karma-fetters for myself, in the same way I am determined to renounce everything and enter the Order ! "

' Not so, Nemi," said Krishna " don't you feel it to be a duty of yours to give to me, Balabhadra, to the king Samudravijaya, to your venerable mother and above all to the fair eyed princess, Rajmati, the joy which you have just now given to these lower animals ? "

" I don't see " said Arishta nemi, " why you should grieve Born and reborn in this series of worldly existences, for times without number, a soul has been suffering untold miseries ! In each of its incarnation, it has a new father, a new mother and a new set of friends and relatives,—but it is the Jiva that is to experience the fruits of its acts and to suffer No body shares its woes The Soul is its own saviour,—there is none else to save it ! Why should others

grieve, if I enter the holy Order for effecting my own deliverance?"

"My son," said the king Samudravijaya, extremely mortified, "you won't be able to suffer the pains of penances. Penance cause extreme sufferings in human bodies."

"I know," replied Arishtanemi, "penances are difficult but they secure one's Liberation which consists in purest joy. The temporary pleasures of the world, on the contrary, lead one to the painful hells I leave it to you, my lord,—to decide which way one should adopt"

The marriage procession ended in a procession of renunciation. The joys and cheers of the marriage were finally drowned in the silence of sorrow King Ugrasena returned to his palace with a sigh and sadly did the Yadavas wend back to Dvaraka

## VII

One year passed away after the marriage-procession of Arishtanemi The prince was giving away all his riches during this time

It was the sixth bright day of the moon in the month of Sravana The heart of the Yadavas was heavy with grief. It was only

a year ago,—on such a day—that the prince Arishtanemi had set out for his marriage with so much pomp and splendour! This day also,—there was a tremendous celebration. From the heavens, the gods were coming down in their thousands, with tumultuous joy. With them, there was a curious, brilliant diamond palanquin, known as Uttara-kuru.

Arishtanemi saw all his relatives, one by one and persuaded them to give him permission to seek the way eternal. Eagerly the gods took up the palanquin on their shoulders when the prince went into it. They celebrated the Diksha-kalyana or the celebration of Initiation, of the Lord by praising him, chanting hymns to him and giving out victorious cries. Thus did the prince leave the worldly life for ever and enter the holy Order.

When that divine palanquin was brought to a forest, Nemi came out of it and took out all his ornaments from his body. He made himself perfectly naked and drew out five tufts of hair from his head. The king of the gods reverently took those hairs in his hands and when returning to the heavens with the

gods, threw those hairs into the Milk Ocean. Krishna came back to Dvaraka with the ornaments of Nemi,—weeping all the way.

With perfect self control, Arishtanemi now immersed himself in the deepest contemplation. The son of the mightiest monarch Samudravijaya, was now an anchorite living naked in a forest! At the time of breaking his fast for the first time, he stood at the door of a Brahmana, Varadatta by name. Varadatta greeted him with perfect reverence and fed him to the best of of his means—and lo! the gods, wondering at his good fortune, showered in his house the Five Wonders!

With strict austerity and self-control, Nemi went on with his self development. Fifty four days passed away. Near the Raivata hill was a forest, known in those days as the Sahasramra-vana i.e., a forest of 1000 mango trees,—where at last, Nemi destroyed the four Ghati-karmas. Upon the annihilation of these four modes of the Destructive Karmas, Arishtanemi came to be possessed of the pure Kevala-jnana i.e., omniscience. The throne of Indra, trembled in heaven.

It was the morning time of the fifteenth dark day of the moon in the month of Asvina—the moon being in the constellation of Chitra—that Arishtanemi attained omniscience. The gods, as usual on that occasion, came down and celebrated the fourth Kalyana with great pomp.

The gods then made the great Assembly for the Lord, known as the Samavasarana. The Lord Nemi used to explain the way to the Deliverance irrespectively to the gods, men, beasts, birds, women, house holders, wanderers, rich people, beggars—to all who were assembled in that great Hall. He preached his immortal doctrines in distant countries. When the Samavasarana was reported to have come near Dvāraka, Krishna, mounted on an elephant came to see the Lord, with the Yadavas, his mothers, the princes and the princesses of his family. In front of the Assembly he came down from the elephant and leaving aside his royal robe, etc., entered the Samavasarana, humbly attired through the northern gate. He bowed down to the Lord in all humility. When he was seated the Lord addressed the people that were assembled there, thus,—

“Remember, the wealth etc in this world are of short duration like the flash of lightning Riches and Youngage are momentary, like the shades of cloud Body is brittle like a bubble This world is no good, —Right Faith Right Knowledge and Right Conduct are the only things to be sought after,—these alone are the Jewel which lights the way to the final Liberation ”

It is said that king Baradatta was the first person to accept the Jaina faith, on hearing the lecture of Lord Neminatha He was followed by no less than two thousand princes of the Kshatriya clans Persons who had been his friends, kinsmen or ministers in his previous incarnations, were now the ruling princes, all of them embraced the Jaina faith, at the feet of Neminatha There were eleven Ganadharas or leaders in the Samavasarana of Nemi, of whom Baradatta was one The princes of the Yadu dynasty too, learnt the householders, duties in the Assembly of the Lord For the moral uplift of the women, an Aryika-samgha or Sisterhood was formed At day break, the Lord himself used to lecture, towards the latter part of the day, Ganadhara Baradatta was

the speaker. The fame of the Lord's Assembly and the light of the true faith, spread far and wide. The Lord Neminatha was the Lord to all alike—to the weary, to the bereaved, to the dull, to the poor. People of all classes used to come to his Samavasarana from remotest places and got the peace which they thirsted after.

### VIII

Princess Rajimati fell into a swoon, when she found Arishtanemi returning from her father's house. On the application of cool water etc., she came back to her senses when she cursed her lot and lamented, "My lord! If you knew me to be unworthy of you, why did you come to marry me at all and thereby create in me a beautiful hope, not destined to be fulfilled? Why did you cheer me up and then leave me utterly despondent? Look,—my lord!—even now things are kept properly arranged for the celebration of the marriage,—but which way are you now on, O, my lord?"

"Princess," said her companion, "don't be grieved. It is well that you have not been married to the prince Nemi. I am sure, he

is a cruel cowardly wild and unkind animal. You should think your status that he has gone back without marrying you. Think how unfortunate it would have been if he had left you thus after the marriage. There are many renowned princes in the Yadu family e.g. Samba, Pradyumna etc. There will be no want of a fit bride groom for you."

At this, the princess felt like a spirited serpent, wantonly kicked and replied in rage "What do you think there will be another marriage of mine? I have already surrendered myself to the prince Nemi. He may have discarded me but I am his wife all the same. Am I a dissolute woman that I would seek the love of another man?"

All were thunderstruck at what Rajimati said.

Arishtanemi had a younger brother whose name was Ratha-nemi. Although Arishtanemi had come back without marrying Rajimati. Ratha-nemi used to visit her from time to time with precious articles as presents to her. Rajimati attributed this conduct of Ratha-nemi to his feeling respect for his elder brother's wife. But she, simple



hearted as she was, could not understand how the lustful heart of Ratha-nemi was being burnt at the wonderful beauty of her person. Rajimati used to accept the presents of Rathanemi with a feeling of tender affection while the foolish Rathanemi thought that his success was nearing. Rathanemi now began to come to her daily and to indulge in jokes and jests, whenever he found an opportunity. Rathanemi was her brother-in-law, the younger brother of Arishtanemi, 'the life and light of her soul'; fie, could there be any evil intention in his heart?—Never,—so thought Rajimati.

The wicked Rathanemi thought that there was now no doubt that the bird had at last been caught. So he made himself bold one day to say, "My elder brother was ill-starred; he was not destined to have any enjoyments in his life and so he did not marry you. Here am I, however, seeking your hands. Do you see the difference between us, the two brothers? Look, how the youthful age of both mine and yours, is being wasted. Fair girl, let us marry."

Rajimati was startled. "Fie! Was it the brother of Arishtanemi that said so? The

princess discussed and explained to him, many salutary principles of morality and bade him good-bye for that day.

Moral instructions, however, could not purify the heart of the wretch in the least, his lustful propensity became rather stronger. "How lovely is that face!" thought he, "how captivating are her eyes! Rajmati, when angry, looks the more beautiful! Her rebukes also sound so sweet!" Rathanemi renewed his visit to her. His intentions were no longer unknown to the princess. Intolli-gent, as she was, she hit upon a plan to reform his mind.

Rathanemi came and put forward his ugly proposal once more!

It so happened that the princess had drunk a very inordinate quantity of milk that day. She now began to smell peculiar fruit which made her vomiting irresistible. "Prince, prince," cried she, "be good to bring me a golden plate."

At once did the lustful Rathanemi bring a golden plate and hold it near the mouth of the princess, like a slave. Soon the plate was filled with her vomittings.

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"Rathanemi," said Rajimati, composedly, "drink it up."

"Am I a dog?" exclaimed Rathanemi, jumping up, "that I would drink your vomitting?"

"You know then," said the princess, "that one should not drink the vomit of another."

"Where is the wretch who does not know this?"

"If you know it," said Rajimati, "why do you want to have me? I am nothing better than the vomitting of your elder brother. Let alone these talks,—never in future utter such a sinful proposal."

Rathanemi came back ashamed,—resolved that he would lead a better life henceforward.

The pain that Rajimati felt in her at the sight of her lord being carried in the divine palanquin, on the way of the great renunciation was indescribable. She could not bear the sight for a long time,—she fell down unconscious.

Rajimati could not be kept back when the Samavasarana of the Lord was reported

to have approached Dvaraka. She openly joined the Order of the nuns and getting herself duly initiated began to spend her days in holy contemplations.

Rathanemi too used to come to the Lord's Assembly.

A heavy shower of rain had poured down and the roads and streets had all been flooded. It was very difficult accordingly to walk on the roads. Rajimati had gone to the Lord Nemi that day and after paying her respects to him was returning home from the Samavasarana. As the raining became more furious, she could not quite follow the Sisters of the Order. Soon she lost her way and found herself alone while the shower of rain became the more virulent. There was a hill nearby and she entered its cave. No one was found in the cave and as the wearing apparel of Rajimati was wet with rainwater, she took it off from her body and began to fly it to make it dry.

To the shameful satisfaction of his vicious eyes, a young man enjoyed the naked beauty of the princess and then approaching her, said—unable to control himself,—“Finest girl! don't turn away your face this time.

Remember, how many times have I sought you and how often you have turned a deaf ear to my entreaties. To-day, I have been favoured with a happy opportunity for enjoyment."

This young man was none other than Ratha-nemi. The heavy shower of rain had already compelled him to take shelter in the cave. Rajimati, however, could not see him on account of dense darkness.

In all haste, Rajimati covered her body with the clothes and then turning towards Ratha-nemi said,—“Fie! So low, so vile are your desires, although you come of such a high family! How do you forget that you are the younger brother of the omniscient Lord? I am a disciple of the Lord and woe to him who would dare to violate my chastity, Fie! Don't you feel ashamed to think that I would be an object of your coarsest enjoyment? Did I not tell you that I should be looked upon by you as vomiting. Do you like to make meals of vomiting? Fie! Rathanemi! Be careful yet—never deviate from Right Conduct! It is no use, listening to moral teachings, unless you act on them! If you do not control yourself,—know for certain—you are doomed and damned!”

At last the wretch was brought round latease remorse now nte into his heart He now gave up all that was worldly Openly and uareservedly did he confess his misconduct before the Lord He began to practise vows etc,—as a result of which he was possessed of right knowledge in the course of a year

## IX

Every one was startled to hear from the Lord that Dvaipayana would destroy Dvaraka and Krishaa was to die at the hands of Jarakumara Lest wine would be the cause of the ruin of Dvaraka, Krishna stopped its drink in his kingdom At his order, the people of Dvaraka went out and poured all the wine they had in a cave called Kadambari in the Kadamba forest near the Girinara mountain Hearing of the dreadful prediction of the Lord Nemi, the sage Dvaipayana left the city of the Yadavas and in order that he might not injure it in any way, immersed himself in profound contemplation in a distant lonely forest

“And being a son of Basudeva how shall I kill my own brother? This shall not be Rather shall I take care that none can



touch a hair in Krishna's head " Determined thus Jarakumara roamed outside the limits of Dvaraka, armed to the teeth and ready to die for its safety.

But the prophecy of Neminatha was not to be false.

One day, troubled by the scorching rays of the Baisakha sun, a companion of the prince Samha came near the Kadambari cave, while wandering in the forest. He was extremely thirsty and consequently drank the wine there to his heart's content. The immense quantity of wine,—that had been at Dvaraka and poured out there—became extremely delicious to taste, on account of its being kept confined within the stony cave in a cool forest; the season flowers of the forest fell into it and enhanced its sweet taste and smell quite a thousand-fold. To please his lord Samba, that attendant of his, secretly brought some quantity of the wine for his master.

"Hurrah!" cried Samba, being well pleased at its taste, "where have you got it?"

The companion brought Samba and his followers to the Kadambari cave, where the princes drank heavily and lost their senses.

At the foot of the hill was the sage Dvaipayana, lost in deep meditation and unconscious of the outside world. Prince Samba, owing to his drunken condition, was unable to walk properly. He, however, moved towards the sage as best as he could and pointing towards him cried out,—“Is this the man who will destroy our fair city?” At once, the Yadava princes, all mad with wine, ran towards him and began to kick him, throw stones at him and strike him mercilessly with weapons. Unable to bear the onslaught any longer, Dvaipayana fell down, apparently dead; the princes laughed merrily and returned to Dvaraka.

Being informed of this sad occurrence, Krishna hastened to the forest with Balabhadra and asked for the sage's pardon, falling at his feet. In the agonies of death, Dvaipayana, however, could not cool down his mind. He died, saying, “None in Dvaraka shall escape my wrath save and except you too. The penances I have so long practised shall be fuel to the fire of my vengeance. Fire shall burn,—Dvaraka shall be a heap of ashes—all shall die—and nothing shall be spared!”

Krishna returned with a heavy heart

and proclaimed the dire determination of the dying Dvaipayana, throughout his kingdom. He, however, advised his subjects to be pious in heart and deed. The people of Dvaraka accordingly began to do acts of morality with scrupulous care and Krishna used to go to the Raivataka hill to attend to the noble teachings of the omniscient Lord Neminatha.

On his death, Dvaipayana re-incarnated as a demon. He recollected his vengeful vow and came to Dvaraka. At that time, however, Dvaraka was practically flooded with sentiments and acts of strict piety and the vicious demon was utterly unable to harm it in any way, in the least. Dvaipayana, baffled in his purpose, stayed in Dvaraka for eleven long years. The Yadavas did not swerve an inch from the path of righteousness and consequently the wicked Dvaipayana too could not injure them during that period.

After the practice of strict self-control for eleven years, the people of Dvaraka used often to have such talks among themselves—

“We have been practising strict self-control.”

"O, our austerities are too severe to be expressed in language. We are practically anchorites, practising penances "

"Do you know anything about Dvaipayana?"

"O, he died long ago "

"He can't do any wrong to us, can he?"

"How can he? The severe penances that we have been practising these eleven years have destroyed all his powers "

"Well, then, what is the good of our continuing to be pious any longer?"

"We need not be so pious now "

"It would not be had then, if we drink a little wine from time to time "

"Certainly not."

"And supposing we eat a little meat with it—"

"O, absolutely harmless."

It is needless to state that immorality spread in Dvaraka and thereby the wicked Dvaipayana found an opportunity to wreak his old vengeance

Suddenly the city of Dvaraka was startled by supernatural visitations. Shooting of stars on all sides, rumblings of thunder in cloudless sky, earthquakes every now and then, rise of dreadful comets and stars,—what a sad day for Dvaraka! The solar disc appeared perforated, there were showers of ashes,—and all unknown, the sun and the moon were eclipsed. Loud and weird laughs were heard in houses and jackals and other wild animals began to roam in the public streets, fearless. The citizens dreamt had dreams and they found in those dreadful days the demon Dvaipayana wandering throughout the country, accompanied by ghosts and spectres.

Wind blew furiously. Logs of wood, dry grass and huge trees were thrown into Dvaraka by the storm. The city was practically choked with dry grass and fuel. Suddenly there blew up a terrible fire,—a fire that could not be extinguished in any way. Soon, Dvaraka was hopelessly on fire,—people could not save themselves even by flying away. The dreadful Dvaipayana by dint of his demoniac powers, overwhelmed the strength of all the Yadavas and threw

them into that all-devouring fire. None was spared.

When their dear city of Dvaraka was thus in the jaws of horrible ruin, the brothers, Rama and Krishna were making their best attempts to save Basudeva, Devaki and Rohini. Basudeva, Devaki and Rohini found sure destruction in the dreadful fire that was blazing so furiously on all sides. They cried out in bitterness,—whereupon Rama and Krishna ran towards them and put them in a chariot as soon as possible. They hoped to save the parents in any way possible. But the demoniac powers of Dvaipayana had already deprived the horses of all their strength and so they stood motionless. Wild fire came to devour them,—whereupon Balabhadra and Krishna began to draw the car themselves. Suddenly, the parts of the car broke down and it stopped. Fire surrounded Basudeva and the two mothers completely by this time and they cried out in dismay, 'O Rama, O Krishna!' The dutiful brothers took the parents to the gates of Dvaraka, some how through the hungry fire,—a little space off, and they would be safe in a place outside the burning city! Suddenly, the gates of the city were violently closed before them and

there appeared the terrible Dvaipayana in front of them! Balabhadra took no notice of the demon and broke the gates of Dvaraka with a kick. But the car would not move,—its wheels were hopelessly embedded in the earth. All hopes were gone by this time and Rama and Krishna looked a piteous look towards Dvaipayana. The stony heart of the wretch was not softened and he addressed them,—“What! Did I not tell you before that none would be spared except you two brothers? Don’t you know that I have sacrificed my life-long goodness and patient practice of penances,—all for this?”

In tears, Krishna and Balabhadra approached the parents,—it was too much for them to separate themselves from their beloved father and mothers. “Dearest sons,” said now the parents, “go away now; let us have what is inevitable; just try to save yourselves; for the renowned name of the Yadu family clings only to you two, now. We now find our shelter in the Arhats, the Siddhas, the Sadhus and the Dharma as proclaimed by the Arhats.” There showered down a rain of solid fire attended with deafening sound,—and Basudeva and the mothers were burnt down to ashes in no time!

For six months, the fair city burned,—after which it was nothing but a heap of ashes. Then there was a great flood and no trace of Dvaraka was left.

The imperial overlord of Dvaraka was now a street-beggar. Krishna and Balabhadra now resolved to spend the remaining days of their lives under the protection of the Pandavas, their cousins and fast friends. With great difficulty, they passed their way through a long forest. When in the Kousamba wood, Krishna was troubled by extreme thirst. Balabhadra went in search of water, when leaving him, the heart of Balabhadra, however, was seized by some unknown fear. "Brother," said he accordingly, "take special care of yourself—so long as I do not return." "And O gods of the forest," prayed his the perturbed soul, "Be pleased to protect my brother who was once the lord of the world and the best of men! Alas! he is thirsty to day. I go to bring water for him, save him from all dangers till I come back!"

Balabhadra went away with a troubled heart.

His tongue was dry in extreme thirst.



and Krishna fell down under a tree. He covered himself in a cloth and was soon fast asleep. Only his red feet were visible and seeing them from afar, a hunter threw a sharp arrow towards them, thinking that there was a deer there! At this terrible wound, Krishna's sleep subsided and he became restless at the dreadful pain. "Who are you," cried he, "that killed me thus? I did not do you any harm." "I am Jara-kumara," said the anxious hunter, "son of Basudeva. I have been wandering in these dreadful forests for twelve long years, lest my brother Krishna be killed by me. I have never seen a man come here. Who are you?" "Come, brother, come," said Krishna in a trembling voice, "your dwelling in the forest for the last twelve years has been fruitless." Jara-kumara hastened towards Krishna and fell down unconscious at what he saw. He cried piteously when he regained his senses. The high-souled Krishna was dying fast. He consoled Jara-kumara and said, "Fly, brother, fly soon. There will be no end to your dangers as soon as Bala-bhadra arrives here. It may be that he will kill you in anger."

Jara-kumara went away

Seeing that his death was near, the son of Basudeva (Krishna) mentally bowed to the Lord Neminatha and to the Siddhas. Suddenly, there blew a hard gale which broke the limbs of Krishna mercilessly. Troubled by thirst, grief, pain and storm, Krishna thought, 'None could defeat me, yet at last the wicked Dwaipayana is the cause of so much misfortune. If I get him once, I would avenge myself fully.' So thinking, Krishna breathed his last.

## X

When Balabhadra came to Krishna with water in a pot of lotus-leaves, he became almost mad in grief at the sad demise of his brother. He took him in his lap and cried—O how bitterly! It seemed that the trees were standing still in their sympathy for him. The day passed away,—Rama sat on with the dead brother on his lap—he wept for the whole of the night. "Brother," said he in tears, when the day was dawning, "look,—the sun is about to rise, how long will you sleep? We have to pass a long way yet."

The poor Balarama lost his senses and roamed for six months with that lean, dry

and decomposed corpse of Krishna on his shoulders in forests, caverns and caves. Sometimes, he would hurst out in tears and sometimes he would dress that corpse in wild flowers.

At last, a celestial being came to him and convinced him that Krishna had died, that it was impossible to revive him and that there wae no use in carrying his corpse in that way. So he performed the last rites with regard to the dead body of Krishna and took to self-contemplation. The omniscient *Lord Neminatha* understood the state of Rama and was kind enough to send a sage to him without delay. Balabhadra was initiated into the Order by him and began to practise the sacred vows. When he died, he ascended the heaven, known as the *Brahma-loka*.

In *Brahma-loka*, however, the soul of Rama,—very dearly attached at his brother—could not find peace. He began to search for Krishna. With the help of *Avadhi-jnana* or clairvoyant knowledge, he saw through all the places in the heavens. Nowhere, however, he could see Krishna. He turned to the worldly regions, there also he did not

find him. Sad at heart, Balabhadra began to search for him in the infernal regions. In the first hell, in the second hell too,—Krishna was no where. To his great dismay, however, Balabhadra found him at last amidst the intolerable pains, in the dreadful region of the third hell. In hot haste, Balabhadra went down into the third hell and clasping his brother close, told him, “Now, brother, come with me,—why should you suffer so much pains?” Krishna was an infernal being, his body slipped from the hold of Balabhadra, although he tried to keep him. Free from the grasp of Balabhadra, the limbs of Krishna were joined again. With great difficulty, Krishna recognised his brother at last. He bowed to him and told him, “I have got to suffer the infernal pains for many thousand years. For at the time of my death, my mind was not calm and cool but in an extremely angry mood. Lord Nemi also had predicted long ago that I would have to suffer infernal pains for a long, long time. His words were not to be false.”

“Cannot these pains of yours be mitigated in any way?” asked Balabhadra in tears.

Soudharma heaven who put the sacred body of Arishtanemi into it. On a sacred stone, the gods prepared a funeral bed of sandal wood. The Agnikumara gods lit up the funeral fire and the Vayukumara gods fanned the flame. Indra carried the palanquin on his shoulder and bringing it before the fire, put into it the corpse of the Lord. Soon the body of the Tirthankara was reduced to ashes. The gods took the teeth etc of the Lord and threw them into the Milky Ocean amidst heavenly music. .

Nemi-natha is gone;—how long who knows? But his teachings inculcating renunciation are living still,—even to-day they point the world to the way of happiness, eternal. Even to-day the hill Girinara reminds the Indians of the noble Soul

But was Neminatha an historical person? Many supernatural stories fill their place in his life-tale. It is said that he lived for a thousand years; his youth lasted for three hundred years, and the remaining seven hundred years of his life were the period in which he perfected his self and preached

entered the Nirvana. It is on the other hand stated that Neminatha's Nirvana took place eighty-four thousand years before the birth of Parsvanatha. Modern historians, of course, will not believe these accounts and may try to dispense with the historicity of Nemi-natha. But the way in which the Jainas give the account of the life-story of Nemi-natha, shows that he was intimately connected with Krishna the Lord of Dvaraka. If Krishna can be looked upon as a real, historical personage, will it be very inappropriate to admit the historicity of Nemi-natha, as well?

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## APPENDIX

### Lord Neminatha, as an Historical Person.

The Jainas believe in a very remote antiquity of their religion and they say that there have been twenty-three prophets of their faith anterior to Sri Nataputta Mahavira, the last Tirthankara, who was a senior contemporary and a great rival of the Buddha.<sup>1</sup> Along with Mahavira, we also, know something solid and trustworthy about His immediate predecessor Lord Parsvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankara, whom the scholars now regard as a historical person, in the shape of the founder of Jainism.<sup>2</sup> But this opinion tallies not well with the available facts, however meagre they may be; for, we have clear scriptural evidence from both—the Jaina and the non-Jaina sources,<sup>3</sup> besides the epigraphical one as well,<sup>4</sup> that the first preacher of Jainism in

1. "Lord Mahavira and some other Teachers of His Time," pp 13-26 and the Jaina Sutras. (S B E). Pt II Introduction.

2. Harmaworth's History of the World, Vol II, p 1198

3. Bhagavata Purana, Chs 4-5. Vishnu Purana and Satsastra, quoted in VIRA, Vol IV—p 353

4. Jain Emperor Kharavala names Rishabha as "Agra Jina" in his inscription of 160 B C. See JBORS, Vol III p 447.

shrines of the 24 Jaina Tirthankaras were caused to be built by the Jaina King Srenika Bimbisara,<sup>1</sup> who lived at the time of Mahavira and the Buddha and about whom, we know something definite and historical as an Indian monarch.<sup>2</sup> And as such, we find, the Jaina tradition to hold good and we could not be justified in regarding the Jaina belief of 24 Tirthankaras as a myth only. Hence the personality of Lord Nemi, the 22nd Tirthankara was surely something more than mythical.

It has not been long that even Mahavira and Parsva were passed on as shadowy figures;<sup>3</sup> but thanks to the efforts of the western savants, such as Dr Jacobi;<sup>4</sup> who dispelled the above wrong notion about the last two Jaina Tirthankaras. They are not regarded now as mythical personages, but on the contrary, there are scholars, who are coming forward to vouchsafe the historicity of their immediate predecessor

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1 Royal Asiatic Society's Journal for January 1824

2 Smith Early History of India, p 33

3 Cambridge History of India, Vol I (Ancient India) p 152

4 Jaina Sūtras (S B E) Pt II Intro and Ind Ant  
Vol IX pp 161 ff



this Kalpa of Time was Sri Rishabhadeva—the first Tirthankara.

The Jain antiquities of Mathura of about the first century A.C.<sup>1</sup> and those of Khanda-giri (Orissa), which belong to the 2nd century B.C.,<sup>2</sup> support the Jain belief, by representing the Jain prophets in more than one number—thus corroborating the tradition of 24 Tirthankaras. In the Buddhist literature, we find a mention about a Jain temple of Sri Suparshva, (the 7th Jain Tirthankara) situated at Rajagruha, at the time of Gotama Buddha,<sup>3</sup> and it informs us further that Upaka, the Ajivika recluse was a worshipper of Sri Anant Jina;<sup>4</sup> who could be no other than the 14th Tirthankara of the Jainas, since the Ajivikas were connected very much with<sup>5</sup> and accepted most of their tenets from the Jainas themselves.<sup>6</sup> Further on we learn from a Hindu Traveller that the

1. Smith's Jain stupa and other antiquities of Mathura p 13 ff.

2. Bengal, Bihar and Orissa Jain Smaraka pp 94-96

3. Mahavagga I, 22, 13, and Mahavira aura Buddha. p 51.

4. Ariya-Pariyesana Sutta quoted in the Indian Hist. Quarterly. Vol III p 247

5. Lord Mahavira and some other Teachers of His Time, pp 26-30 and the VIRI. Vol III. pp. 316-320.

6. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol I p 261

shrines of the 24 Jaina Tirthankaras were caused to be built by the Jaina King Srenika Bimbisara,<sup>1</sup> who lived at the time of Mahavira and the Buddha and about whom, we know something definite and historical as an Indian monarch.<sup>2</sup> And as such, we find, the Jaina tradition to hold good and we could not be justified in regarding the Jaina belief of 24 Tirthankaras as a myth only. Hence the personality of Lord Nemi, the 22nd Tirthankara was surely something more than mythical.

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1. Royal Asiatic Society's Journal for January 1894

2. Smith's Early History of India p. 33

3. Cambridge History of India Vol. I. Ancient India p. 152

4. Jaina Scriptures (S. B. E.) Pt. II. Intro. and Ind. Ant. Vol. IX. pp. 161 ff.

Lord Nemmatha as well<sup>1</sup> And so it may be expected that with the progress of our knowledge about the ancient India, the value of the Jaina tradition will be fully realised

Since the Jainn tradition about the 24 Tirthankaras seems to hold good, as we have pointed already, the historicity of Lord Nemmatha or Arista Nemi cannot be denied He was a real person and a contemporary of Sri Krishna, the renowned warrior of the Mahā Bharata, who was His cousin<sup>2</sup> Since Sri Krishna is regarded as a historical person, there is no reason, why we should deny the same privilege to the Jaina Tirthankara Prof Dr L D Barnett gives credit to the Jainn belief and writes —

“I would venture to point out a fact which hitherto, I believe, has not received the attention that it merits, namely the corroboration supplied by Jain legend As is well-known, the Jaina Tirathankara Mahavira Vardhamana was preceded by the Tirathankara Parsvanatha, whose predecessor again was Aristanemi, whom Jain

1 Nagendra Nath Vasu Intro to Har vansapurana p. 6

2 Har vansapurana p 433

traditions represent as a contemporary of Kṛṣṇa (Kanhā) Vasudeva. If we may assume an interval of about 200 years between each of these Tīrthankaras, as seems on general grounds most suitable, we bring Aristanemi's date upto about 1000 B C, which nearly corresponds with the date assigned on other grounds by Mr Pargiter to the Bharat war, in which according to tradition, Kṛṣṇa took part, namely 950 B C"<sup>1</sup>

Dr Fuherer of course, preceded Dr Barnett in this respect and he, on the strength of his sound knowledge about the valuable Jaina antiquities of Mithura declared that Neminatha, the 22nd Jaina Tīrthankara was surely a historical person, since Kṛṣṇa is not regarded as a mythical individual.<sup>2</sup>

The mention of one Nemi has also been found in the Yajurveda (IX 25), but the scholars are of opinion, that there is nothing to show him as a Jaina.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the Jainas, have been passing it as a vedic

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1 Ancient M d Ind an Ksatṛiya Tribes Vol I Foreword p IV

2 Epigraphia Indica Vol I p 389 and Vol II pp 206 207

3 Historical Gleanings p 75

reference in regard to the Jaina Tirthankara since a considerable long period<sup>4</sup> and there are also, some orthodox Brahmana Pandits, who give credit to this assertion.<sup>5</sup>

Besides we find it expressed clearly in the "Prabhasa-Purana" that Nemi, as known to the orthodox Brahmans, was a Jina, who obtained emancipation from the mount Revataka (Girnar) <sup>1</sup> This description of the Hindu Purana exactly coincides with the Jaina legend about Lord Nemi and so it is clear that the person known to Hindus by the name of Nemi, was surely no other than the 22nd Tirthankara of the Jainas.

Hence, to close, it is needless to point that the personality of Lord Neminatha certainly appears to possess a reliable historical basis and He was a real person of course.

ALIGANJ (ETAH) } —KAMTA PRASAD JAIN.  
15th July 1928 }

4 See Moksa Marga Prakasaka of Todarmalla

5. Bhagawana Parshvanatha, Intro

1. Raivataadron juno nemaryugadivimalachale  
Rishinamasaramadeva muktimargaaya karanam.

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